

Northanger Abbey -  
Persuasion -

LIFTING THE BURDEN  
FROM THE  
SCHOOL CHILD.

"This Conference is of opinion that the simplification of English spelling is a matter of urgent importance in all parts of the Empire, calling for such practical steps in every country as may appear most conducive to the ultimate attainment of the end in view—the creation, in connexion with the subject, of an enlightened public opinion, and the direction of it to the maintenance, in its purity and simplicity among all English-speaking peoples, of the common English tongue."

(Excerpt from Report of the Imperial Education Conference, 1911.)

Star by H.G. Wells I  
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# SIMPLIFIED SPELLING SOCIETY.

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# SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

## A PRESSING EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

THE aim of the Simplified Spelling Society is to remedy the grave disadvantages resulting from the irrational nature of English spelling.

The present spelling does harm :

1. Because it necessitates much uneducational memorizing and thus wastes time which is sorely needed for other purposes ;
2. Because it imparts faulty ideas about sound, and leads to the neglect of the spoken language ;
3. Because it affords no check on rapid sound change ;
4. Because it hampers us in acquiring foreign languages ;
5. Because it prevents English from becoming the language learnt in all countries beside the mother tongue.

The first drawback is the gravest of all. At present, reading and writing—essential subjects at the threshold of education—are necessarily taught in a manner altogether uneducational. The child is told that there is *i* (pronounced as a diphthong) in *bind*: that seems reasonable. But he also meets with *i* in *bit* (where there is a simple short vowel, very different from the diphthong). We teach the child that the letter *l* stands for the sound *l*; but in *could* we have to admit that it stands for nothing. These are only specimens of many thousand instances of unreason which have to be memorized, and this drilling goes on year after year in the life of school-children. *It has been computed by eminent educationists that at least a year in every school-life is wasted in this way, with no corresponding educational gain*, and the school life of most children is none too long.

### SCHOOL EXPERIMENT SHOWING TIME SAVED AND SPEECH IMPROVED.

There are many ways in which this crying evil could be remedied—many possible degrees of approximation to strict accuracy and consistency in representing the sounds of the language. The Simplified Spelling Society is now promoting a petition to the Prime Minister, asking for a Royal Commission of scholars, teachers, men of letters, and men of business, to consider the whole subject of spelling reform. Being of opinion that a practical test would go far to prove the educational gain that accrues from a rational spelling, the Society has drawn up a tentative and experimental scheme to show how easily the practical advantages of a rational spelling could be obtained. For strict accuracy and complete economy of notation, a certain number of new symbols would be required : but the difficulties connected with the introduction of new type would probably delay indefinitely any prospect of reform. In the Society's scheme,

Romeo Juliet - 3  
King Lear Cymbeline - started  
Julius Caesar  
Timon of Athens

the sounds for which new symbols would be required are represented by a combination of existing letters, technically known as digraphs. The alphabet drawn up by the Society achieves the essential aim of reform, inasmuch as it enables the learner to spell a word correctly as soon as he has heard it correctly pronounced. The scheme has been experimented with in a Scottish elementary school with convincing results. Under conditions which were by no means favourable, a set of children who had been taught from a "reader," printed in simplified spelling, for ten months, and from the ordinary spelling for four, were able to read and spell as well in the latter as another set of children who had worked at the ordinary spelling for nineteen months. **There was not only a gain of five months, but also a marked superiority in clearness of speech.** The gain in time would be far greater if no transition from rational to irrational spelling were necessary, but, even with the transition, it is substantial enough to recommend the scheme very favourably to the notice of teachers.

**Teachers can expedite the process of learning to read by using the "Reeder" in classes. Transition from rational to ordinary spelling is rapid and successful.**

## ADVANTAGES OF RATIONAL SPELLING.

The Society claims also for its scheme of spelling the following advantages :—

1. *It is easy to read and write for one accustomed to the present spelling.*
2. *It would not involve the use of new letters, and could therefore be printed anywhere without any difficulty.*
3. *It would help towards an appreciation of the spoken language, and, by facilitating the training of the ear and the vocal organs, would lead to better speech.*
4. *It would greatly lighten the work of many British subjects in India, South Africa, Canada, and elsewhere, as well as of the foreigner desirous of learning our language; would induce more to make themselves familiar with it; and would remove the chief obstacle to the use of English as an instrument of international communication.*

The Society makes its appeal to all who are interested in the best and most effective methods of education. Reforms have never come by chance, and in this case organized effort is particularly needed to test the value of the scheme in education, and to overcome the prejudice of the public against what is new and unfamiliar. Already the scheme has the approval of such men as Professor Gilbert Murray, Vice-Chancellor Michael Sadler, Sir William Ramsay, The Right Hon. Sir Frederick Pollock, Sir James Donaldson, Professor D. L. Savory, Dr. E. R. Edwards, Mr. Daniel Jones, and Mr. H. G. Wells. The membership of the Society now amounts to over 2,500; the large majority are school teachers who know from experience how great is the boon which a reform in spelling would confer on future generations of school children; but there are

also many belonging to other professions, as well as business men, who realize that a rational spelling would remove one of the barriers to the rapid extension of British foreign trade.

### THE SOCIETY'S WORK.

The propaganda for spelling reform is carried on by means of correspondence in the newspapers, public lectures, and the distribution of literature. Financial support is needed for the various activities of the Society. The annual subscription for Active Membership has been fixed at a minimum of 5s., but the Society also welcomes, as Associate Members, those who cannot afford more than 1s. annually. The subscription for Life Membership is a minimum of £3 and 12s. respectively.

All Members (Active and Associate) receive all publications of the Society that are issued for gratis distribution. Active Members also receive gratis all publications of the Society that are issued at a lower price than sixpence, and are entitled to buy at half-price all publications issued at sixpence or more. All Members receive copies of *The Pyoneer*, the journal issued by the Society.

**For literature and information please apply to**

**THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY,**

**Simplified Spelling Society,  
44 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.**

### SIMPLIFIED SPELLING IN BRIEF.

- (1) The same sound is always represented by the same letter or letters: eni, jepardi, greev, leep (*not* any, jeopardy, grieve, leap).
- (2) Consonants have their usual values. C (except in ch), q, and x are not used.
- (3) Letters not pronounced are not written, and a consonant is not doubled to indicate a short vowel: dout, lam, aktiv, leter, nee (*not* doubt, lamb, active, letter, knee).
- (4) Wherever the z sound (as distinguished from the s) is heard it is written: praiz, windz (*not* praise, winds).
- (5) The digraphs ee, oe may be reduced before another vowel: seing, going.

### VOWEL SOUNDS.

<b>a:</b> hat, glad.	<b>aa:</b> raather, haaf.
<b>e:</b> meni, plezher.	<b>ai:</b> grait, kair.
<b>i:</b> litel, bizi.	<b>ee:</b> eech, reseev.
<b>o:</b> kot, hot.	<b>au:</b> aul.
<b>u:</b> but, bruther.	<b>oe:</b> loe, poest.
<b>oo:</b> book, good.	<b>oo:</b> boon, troo.
<b>eu:</b> Europe.	<b>y:</b> ryt, fyr.
	<b>oi:</b> oil.
	<b>ou:</b> found.

You can help us by signing the Petition. Send a postcard for a copy to the Assistant Secretary, 44 Great Russell St., London, W.C. You are not committed to the approval of a particular scheme of reform, only to the expression of a desire for an enquiry

## HOW TO BEGIN THE REFORM.

There are many who, feeling that it is not enough to subscribe to the doctrine of spelling reform, and that individual action is needed to set the reform in motion, are prepared to adopt some simplifications in their correspondence. To this end the Society has issued a gummed label with the following wording, which those willing to help the movement can affix to their letters:—

We use these because they  
are simpler.

*Tho, altho, thru, thruout, thoro,  
hav, shoud, woud, program,  
catalog.*

The use of these ten simplifications will accustom the public to the idea of change. It will bring home the question of spelling reform to the man who has not time or patience to read pamphlets, and who is more likely to be impressed by practice than by theory. It is in the belief that these simplifications will clear the way for a larger measure of spelling reform, that every member of the Society is urged to begin using them now. Any desired number of labels will be forwarded free on application to the Assistant Secretary.

The following extract from the FERST REEDER which was used for the experiment mentioned on page 4, is given as an example of the Simplifyd Speling scheme, with the additional use of *dh* for the sound in "this." In the REEDER the text is printed in much larger type.

### DHE OEK.

*Liv dhy lyf,  
Yung and oeld,  
Lyk yon oek,  
Bryt in spring,  
Living goeld;*

*Sumer rich  
Dhen ; and dhen,  
Autum chainjd,  
Soebrer heud  
Goeld agen.*

*Aul hiz leevz  
Fauln at length,  
Look, he standz  
Trunk and bou  
Naikid strength.*

TENNYSON.

*Isn't he a won'd'rous man?*

All persons interested in the improvement of English spelling, whatever opinions they may hold as to the mode, character, or extent of such improvement, are invited to become Members.

## FORM OF APPLICATION.

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*Date* ..... 19

To the ASSISTANT SECRETARY,  
SIMPLIFIED SPELLING SOCIETY,  
44 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.

I wish to be enrolled as an Active Member of the  
Simplified Spelling Society, at an Annual Subscription  
of ..... \* and enclose a Cheque or Postal Order  
for my first year's Subscription.

Please  
fill up one  
of these  
alternative  
forms  
and score  
through  
the other.

OR,

I wish to be enrolled as a Life Member of the Simplified Spelling Society, and enclose as my Subscription a  
Cheque or Postal Order for ..... \*\*

*Name* .....

*Occupation* .....

*Address* .....

\* The minimum is Five Shillings for Active Members and One Shilling for Associate Members.

\*\* The minimum is Three Pounds for Active Members and Twelve Shillings for Associate Members.

Cheques and Postal Orders to be made payable to the Treasurer of the Simplified Spelling Society and to be crossed "London and South Western Bank."

*Form of Application for Membership is on page 7.*

The subject of Spelling Reform interests me, and  
I shall be glad to receive further literature.

Name .....

(Mr., Mrs., or Miss.)

Address .....

The Society now numbers over 2,500 Members.

C. F. HODGSON & SON,  
Printers,  
2, NEWTON STREET,  
KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.

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Sauernake fresh  
Hotel -  
Bath - Francis private Hotel  
Lansdowne Road Hotel*



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